When One Awakes ----

Shri Maharaj must have been thinking about the matter as he climbed the steps to his loft room one morning, because he started talking about it as soon as he had taken his seat and settled himself.

He said, "people these days were so enslaved by the clock and the watch that they had no time to watch themselves critically. If only you did not have to wake up, when the alarm goes off, with your heart thudding and your mind already thinking up the various matters which you should start worrying about, it would be most interesting to watch the process of ~~waking~~ awakening. You will would notice, for instance, that between the period of the deep sleep when you are not conscious of anything at all, and you are fully awake, there is the period when consciousness is just shining and the mind weaves its fantasies into a dream, which ends when you are fully awake. What is the first thing that happens when you are awake? Have you ever really experienced it?

"If you were asked what is the first thing that happens when you are awake, you would be inclined to say that you see the objects in the room. Any object has a 'three-dimensional' form which is perceived by 'you'. What is it that perceives the form of an object? Whatever perceives the form of the object must surely prevail prior to the object? You can perceive the various objects, including parts of your own body which are also objects to whatever it is that perceives. Therefore that which perceives is not the body which is only an object. The 'perceiver' is the subject and the thing perceived as is the object."

"What is it that is perceiving? It is your the consciousness, the be-ingness, the I-am-ness, that ~~it~~ is the perceiver. As soon as you wake up, if you were not in ~~to~~ so much of a hurry to get up and go about

your daily routine, you would notice that waking in fact means 'being present' – conscious of being present, not as such and such an individual with a such and such a name, but conscious presence as such, which it is that gives sentience to a sentient being and permits the various senses to function.

"You would then realise that there are two distinct centres. There is this spot of consciousness on behalf of which you instinctively say 'I', and there is the objective centre of a psychosomatic apparatus, with which you identify yourself with a particular name. One is subjectively what-you-are as 'I' and the other, a physical form with which is what-you-appear-to-be as 'me'. There are no 'me's and 'you's – only I.

"Understand this profoundly – and be free: free of the mistaken identity.

"Then there is one final step to be apprehended. This consciousness is the 'sachness', the 'taste' of the essence of food of which the body is made and which is the sustenance sustained. To that extent, it is time-bound, like the body. When the body 'dies', the consciousness disappears – like the flame when the fuel is exhausted. Indeed, consciousness is duration, without which an object would not last long enough to be manifested and perceived. What then, are 'you'? So long as the body exists, you are this conscious presence within, the perceiving principle; when the body dies, 'you' are the Absolute Awareness within which the temporal consciousness merges. And that is the Truth."